

GUIDE FOR RETURNING TO THE WORKPLACE

JULY 2020



As NOVA transitions back to the workplace and begins this “new normal,” we understand that many employees are concerned about safety as well as the changes to NOVA operations. The health, safety and mental well-being of our employees and students remain a top priority.

NOVA will continue to operate from an abundance of caution as we follow the latest guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Virginia Department of Health (VDH). In addition, we will follow all mandates issued by the federal government, the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Chancellor of the Virginia Community College System. We are implementing practices such as enhanced cleaning and social distancing to keep our workplace healthy.

NOVA’s *Return to Campus Plan – Fall 2020* has been developed in accordance with Governor Northam’s *Higher Education Reopening Guidance*. NOVA will follow Governor Northam’s *Forward Virginia* and its three-phased approach. However, it is possible that Virginia will move back and forth between phases based on evidence of rebound of COVID-19.

In the months to come, we will continue to monitor the pandemic circumstances and adjust to changing conditions in order to keep our workplace safe going forward.

WORKPLACE EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES

All NOVA employees are expected to fully comply with the policies, protocols and guidelines outlined in this document. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

REQUIRED TRAINING

Prior to returning to campus, all faculty, staff and students are required to complete an online COVID-19 training module that includes safety and anti-stigma information. Full-time faculty and staff can access the Return to NOVA COVID-19 training modules in *NOVA Academy (COVLC)*. Adjunct faculty and wage employees can access the training modules in *CANVAS*.

NOVA COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP PLEDGE

All faculty and staff asked to return to campus are expected to take the *#YouMatterToNOVA Community Partnership Pledge*.

Together, we pledge to take responsibility for our own health, the protection of others and keeping the NOVA community safe from spread of COVID-19. The *#YouMatterToNOVA Community Partnership Pledge* can be found online *here*.

SYMPTOM MONITORING

Employees who have been instructed to return to the workplace must monitor their symptoms every day before reporting to work.

Employees are encouraged to check their symptoms daily using the GoCanvas application (*GoCanvas Download and Use Instructions*) to perform self-health screening. This app is customized for NOVA's health screening conditions and uses the approved health-related questions established by the Virginia Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM). Personal health information is not gathered or stored in the app or by NOVA.

Employees who pass the health screening can report to work. Individuals who fail the health screening are instructed not to come to the College, to consult a physician and to contact their supervisor.

At this time, symptoms include one or more of the following:

- ✔ Fever or chills
- ✔ Cough
- ✔ Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- ✔ Fatigue
- ✔ Muscle or body aches
- ✔ Headache
- ✔ New loss of taste or smell
- ✔ Sore throat
- ✔ Congestion or runny nose
- ✔ Nausea or vomiting
- ✔ Diarrhea

It is very important that individuals with even mild signs of illness (fever, cough, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat) stay home to prevent spreading illness to others.

According to guidance from the Virginia Department of Health (June 3, 2020), individuals with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 are no longer contagious if these three things have happened:

1. You have had no fever for at least three days (that is, 72 hours of no fever without the use of medicine that reduces fevers)
AND
2. Other respiratory symptoms have improved (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath have improved
AND
3. At least 10 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared.

Employees who have been directed to isolate at home should contact Human Resources for further guidance on when to return to work.

FACE COVERINGS AND PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

Individuals who do not feel ill or exhibit symptoms can still spread COVID-19, so all NOVA faculty, staff, students, college contractors and visitors attending the College will be required to wear a face covering (see NOVA's *COVID-19 Face Covering Policy*). Face coverings should be used in accordance with *acceptable and effective practices as established by the CDC*. When you are alone,

you do not need to wear a face covering. You should avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth when removing a mask, and wash your hands immediately before and after removal.

Public health is everyone's responsibility. If you need a face covering, you can pick up a reusable cloth face mask at any Parking or NOVACard office.

If you encounter anyone not wearing a face covering, maintain a physical distance of at least six feet. Please do not call the police or local health department for this purpose.

If you need a clear face shield, contact the Director of Campus Operations or the Office of Emergency Management and Safety at oem@nvcc.edu to request one.

Gloves may be provided to NOVA staff in some instances where recommended or required by DHRM or OSHA guidance. Most individuals will not need to wear gloves in the course of their everyday duties or instruction. Gloves do not replace the need to wash hands often or to avoid touching one's face.

COLLEGE OPERATIONS

The Office of Emergency Management and Safety and the Return to NOVA Advisory Group (RNAG) will continue to work closely with each campus and NOVA-leased facilities to implement NOVA's COVID-19 return to campus plans.

- The majority of NOVA courses will be offered through our approved distance learning formats.

- The majority of student services will continue to be delivered remotely.
- NOVA continues to offer telework options for employees who are able to perform the essential functions of their jobs remotely, particularly for employees who are at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

NOVA will phase in a return of staff over time based on mission-critical operations, ability to control and manage specific work environments, and the need to access on-site resources. NOVA will be prepared to move more individuals back to or away from our campuses as Virginia public health restrictions and the local situation change.

STAFFING OPTIONS

When employees are instructed to return to work on site, managers should consider options to maintain required social distancing measures and reduce the number of people at the work site.

- Remote Work: Employees are given the opportunity to fulfill some or all of their work responsibilities remotely. Supervisor approval is required and this option may be approved on a full- or part-time basis, as appropriate.
- Alternating Days: Departments may schedule partial staffing on alternating days to enable social distancing, especially in areas with large common workspaces.
- Staggered Reporting/Departing: Staggering reporting and departure times will reduce traffic in common areas to meet social distancing requirements.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR HIGH-RISK INDIVIDUALS

Based on currently available information and clinical expertise, the CDC has advised that older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions might be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

- Older adults ([CDC Link](#))
- People with underlying health conditions ([CDC Link](#))

Once instructed to return to work on site, if you have concerns about doing so due to a medical condition that places you in a high-risk group, contact ada@nvcc.edu to request a reasonable accommodation. If you require flexibility in the workplace that is not related to an approved accommodation, you should speak with your supervisor to develop a plan to achieve work goals.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

NOVA will support physical distancing with operational changes, remote services, modifications to existing instruction and workplace areas on campus, and the following practices:

- **Office Environments:** If you work in an open environment, be sure to maintain at least six feet of distance from co-workers. If you work in an office, no more than one person should be in the same room unless the required six feet of distance can be consistently maintained.

- **Restrooms:** Use of restrooms should be limited based on size to ensure at least six feet of distance between individuals. Wash hands thoroughly afterward.
- **Elevators:** No more than one person may enter an elevator at a time, so please use the stairs whenever possible.
- **Meetings:** Where feasible, meetings should be held using available collaboration tools (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Teams, telephone, etc.). In-person meetings are limited to the restrictions of local, state and federal orders, assuming individuals can still maintain six feet of separation for social distancing requirement.
- **Communal Areas:** Meeting rooms, break rooms and other communal areas may have reduced seating and capacity limits. Hallways and stairways may be marked as one way to reduce face-to-face traffic.
- **Public Transportation:** Employees who use public transportation or ride sharing are encouraged to review CDC guidance on how to protect themselves when using transportation.

HEALTH AND HYGIENE PRACTICES

WHAT THE COLLEGE IS DOING:

- Common areas and frequently touched surfaces are being cleaned and disinfected routinely. Cleaning supplies will be available and employees are encouraged to clean and disinfect workspaces throughout the workday.

➤ To the extent possible allowed by current supply-chain limitations, NOVA will make available:

➤ Hand sanitizing stations at entrances of buildings, outside of restrooms and outside of elevators

➤ Hygiene stations in classrooms

➤ Cloth face coverings, if needed

➤ Face shields (non-medical grade), if needed

➤ Tissues

➤ Posters are displayed with reminders on how to prevent the spread of germs.

➤ Classroom layouts are being modified and Stay Safe with Ace stickers will be placed to designate safe distancing between seats in classroom and campus spaces.

➤ Work routines and methods of delivery of services are being modified to reduce exposure.

➤ Plexiglass barriers are being installed in service areas.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

➤ Wash your hands with soap and water frequently for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer.

➤ Cover your nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing.

➤ Avoid touching your face.

➤ Wear a face covering.

➤ Replace handshakes with alternative forms of acknowledgment like head nods and waves.

➤ Avoid using other employees' phones, desks, offices or other work tools and equipment, when possible.

MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP):

The Commonwealth of Virginia's *Employee Assistance Program* (EAP) is offered through the employee's health insurance provider to maintain the health and the well-being of its employees. *EAP services* include counseling and referral for problems such as alcohol or substance abuse, marital or family difficulties, financial problems and mental and medical disorders. EAP services are confidential and voluntary and EAP counselors are available 24/7.

Employees also have access to online EAP resources on individual counseling, legal/financial consultations and other services through their individual state health plan benefit.

TO CONTACT THE EAP:

COVA Care and COVA HDHP:

855-223-9277 or www.AnthemEAP.com

(Company Name: Commonwealth of Virginia)

COVA HealthAware: 888-238-6232 or www.mylifevalues.com (Password: COVA)

Kaiser Permanente HMO: 866-517-7042 or www.achievesolutions.net/kaiser

Optima Health Vantage HMO:

866-846-2682 or

www.optimahealth.com/cova

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Warm Line Virginia Callers: An anonymous support line launched by the Mental Health Association of Virginia (MHAV) is another COVID-19-related resource for Virginia state employees. This Warm Line, or peer-run service, is available for individuals and family members undergoing trauma or other distress who would like to talk with someone, request community health resources or who have questions about recovery. While the trained peer operators involved in the Warm Line are not licensed professionals, medical providers or legal advisers, they maintain strict confidentiality. They offer strength-based support, resilience building strategies and community resources and referrals.

Connect with MHAV's Peer-Run Warm Line and other resources for wellness and recovery:

Warm Line Virginia Callers

877-349-6428

Monday - Friday - 9:00 AM to 9:00 PM

Saturday - Sunday - 5:00 PM to 9:00 PM

DHRM Child and Elder Care Resource

Guide: It can be challenging for employees to balance the needs of work and family now that schools and many childcare and adult day care centers are closed. This list of community resources may assist employees in finding alternative arrangements for their family.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

(CDC): Coping With Stress

Mental Health and COVID-19: Information and resources from the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP)

Red Cross Online Training: Psychological First Aid: Supporting Yourself and Others During COVID-19.

NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness): Education, support groups, help line. Find your local chapter.

PRS CrisisLink: Provides a range of programs to prevent crises from occurring, intervene when they do and assist those who lose loved ones to suicide or another sudden and traumatic loss.

Call: 800-273-TALK (8255)]

Text: "CONNECT" to 855-11

Lifeline Chat:

SuicidePreventionLifeline.org/chat

Psych Hub: The most comprehensive online learning platform on mental health, substance use and suicide prevention topics in the world.

NOVA PLEDGE, POLICIES AND FAQ

I. NOVA COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP PLEDGE

Together, we pledge to take responsibility for our own health, the protection of others and keeping the NOVA community safe from spread of COVID-19.

II. COVID-19 FACE COVERING POLICY

All NOVA faculty, staff, students, college contractors and visitors are required to wear

a face covering that covers the mouth and nose while on College property, indoors or out, when a physical distance of six (6) feet or greater cannot be maintained.

III. CONTAGIOUS DISEASE POLICY

The *Contagious Disease Policy* applies to all members of the College community, including students, employees, contractors, vendors and visitors. The purpose of this *policy* is to help prevent the spread of communicable/contagious diseases through measures that focus on safety, prevention and education.

NOVA will make available to its College community information about the transmission of diseases and precautions that infected persons should take to prevent the spread of disease.

IV. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

NOVA has compiled a list of frequently asked questions to help address common concerns. This list can be found organized by topic on the *NOVA COVID-19 website*.



**STAY SAFE
WITH ACE!**